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Identical letters dated 18 December 1996 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a statement concerning the Iranian occupation of the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, three islands that form an integral part of the sovereign territory of the United Arab Emirates. The statement is part of the final communiqué adopted by the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council at its seventeenth session, held in Doha, Qatar, from 7 to 9 December 1996 under the chairmanship of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifah Al Thani, Amir of Qatar.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 24 and 145, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammad J. SAMHAN
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Excerpt from the final communiqué adopted by the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council at its seventeenth session, held in Doha, Qatar, from 7 to 9 December 1996

The occupation of the three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates, and relations with Iran

(a) The occupied islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates

The Supreme Council reviewed recent developments in the situation with regard to Iran's occupation of the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates. It noted that the Iranian Government was continuing to take measures aimed at perpetuating its occupation of the islands by pursuing a policy of imposing faits accomplis by use of force, thereby persisting in the further pursuit of its unwarranted and provocative measures. The Council reiterated its profound regret that the Islamic Republic of Iran was maintaining its refusal to respond positively to the repeated, earnest and sincere calls for a peaceful resolution of the dispute that have been made by the United Arab Emirates, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Damascus Declaration countries, the Council of the League of Arab States and the Arab Summit Conference. The Council further expressed its disapproval of the successive Iranian measures taken on the islands and its continuing concern at the possible consequences of the Iranian Government's insistence on pursuing a policy of imposing faits accomplis by force. Such measures represent a violation of the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates and an infringement of its rights with respect to the islands. They also jeopardize security and stability in the region and are incompatible with the principles and norms of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, the Charter of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the principles of good-neighbourliness and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity as they concern the States of the region.

The Council renews its affirmation of the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over the islands in question and of its unconditional support for all the peaceful measures the United Arab Emirates is taking with a view to restoring the exercise of that sovereignty. It reiterates its call to the Iranian Government to end its occupation of the islands, to desist from pursuing a policy of imposing faits accomplis by force, to suspend the implementation of any measures taken unilaterally, to remove any facilities unilaterally installed on the islands and to resolve the ongoing dispute in a peaceful manner in accordance with the principles and norms of international law, including agreement to refer the question to the International Court of Justice.

(b) Relations with Iran

The Council discussed developments in connection with relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran in the light of its established position centred on the importance of relations based on good-neighbourliness, commitment to the principles of mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of

other States, avoidance of the use or threat of use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the principles and norms of international law, and the need for action to ensure the maintenance of security and stability in the region.

In this context, the Council expressed deep concern that the Islamic Republic of Iran had deployed surface-to-surface missiles in the Arabian Gulf and even on the three occupied islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates, thereby placing the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council and their vital installations under direct threat. It further expressed its concern at Iran's continuing endeavour to acquire and build an arsenal of weapons of mass destruction and to have a conventional and non-conventional weapons capability that surpasses its legitimate defence needs. Accordingly, in light of the international strategic importance of the Gulf region, the Council renewed its call to the international community and the relevant international organizations to make active efforts to transform that region into a zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

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